

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks herewith, which place the application into condition for allowance. The present amendment is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application.

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS AND FORMAL MATTERS

Claims 1-4, 7, 8, 10-19, 22-24, and 26 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 4, 7, 10-12, 19, 22-24, and 26 are hereby amended. Claims 1, 4, 19, 22-24, and 26 are independent. Claims 5, 6, 9, 20, 21 and 25 are hereby canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter.

Claims 1, 4, 7, 19, and 23-26 were objected to because of a broad range or limitation followed by a linking term.

Claims 4, 6, 10-12, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, and 26 were objected to due to informalities.

II. REJECTIONS OF CLAIMS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102(b) AND §103(a)

Claims 4, 5, 20, and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly anticipated by U.K. Patent Application No. 2355080 to Lloyd (hereinafter, merely "Lloyd").

Claim 22 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Lloyd in view of JP Patent No. 2002-296670 to Tada (hereinafter, merely "Tada").

III. RESPONSE TO OBJECTIONS AND REJECTIONS

The Office Action indicated that claims 1-3, 7, 8, and 10-17 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the objections. The Office Action indicated that claims 6, 19, 23, 24, and 26 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Independent claim 1 is amended herein, thereby obviating the objection.

Independent claims 4 has been rewritten to include all the limitations of claim 6.

Claims 19, 23, 24, and 26 have been rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 22 is amended herein, obviating the rejection.

Therefore, Claims 1, 4, 19, 22, 23, 24, and 26 are believed to be patentable.

IV. DEPENDENT CLAIMS

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

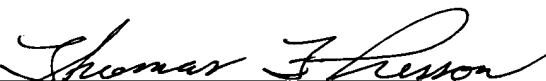
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are patentable and Applicants respectfully request early passage to issue of the present application.

Please charge any additional fees that may be needed, and credit any
overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

Respectfully submitted,

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